DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 289 786 SO 018 643

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TITLE Humanism and Geography. Papers Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association of Geographers (Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, 1986). Carleton Geography Discussion Paper No. 3.
INSTITUTION Carleton Univ., Ottawa (Ontario). Dept. of Geography.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-7709-0202-2
PUB DATE 86
NOTE 63p.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Autobiographies; Christianity; *Geography; *Human Geography; *Humanism; Language; Methods; Sciences; Semiotics; Social Sciences
IDENTIFIERS Mental Models; Rationalism

ABSTRACT

Papers are included which focus on humanist geography, specifically the theoretical, methodological, and empirical implications of humanist perspectives for the study of human-environmental relations and the implications of the concern for these relations for humanist theory, method, and questions. Individual foci, defined by each author of the included papers, are: (1) "Geography as a Humanist Enterprise" (Leonard Guelke), arguing that the credibility and the survival of geography as a scholarly discipline depends upon a clear disciplinary framework within which analysis can proceed; (2) "Problems with the New Humanism" (Edward Relph), arguing against a narrow rationalism, but also against uncritical acceptance of humanism; (3) "Humanist Geography: Some Unsystematic Critical Thoughts" (James Lemon), arguing against the concept of humanist geography because of its concern with language and method; (4) "Humanist Political Geography?" (David B. Knight), addressing political geography, combining autobiography and assessment of literature to explore the relation between humanist geographers and geographies; (5) "A Theological Perspective on Humanist Geography" (Iain Wallace), discussing Christian theology as a foundation for humanism, and the relation between this and other forms of humanism; (6) "Geographical Semiotics: A Bridge between Humanism and Science" (Elaine M. Bjorklund), suggesting semiotics as a bridge between humanism and science and discussing the processes by which human beings construct mental models; (7) "Humanism, Geography, and Language" (Audrey Kobayashi), arguing for the necessity of a theory of language to give geographical humanism political soundness; and (8) "Humanism as Science/Science in Humanism: Towards Integration in the Practice of Social Geography" (Robin A. Kearns), addressing the bridging of science and humanism. A postscript provides a defense and related concepts: "Human Environment" (Suzanne Mackenzie). References accompany most of the papers. (AEM)

HUMANISM AND GEOGRAPHY

edited by

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Discussion Paper No. 3

1986

Department of Geography
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Ottawa, K1S 5B6
Canada

ISSN: 0826-3248
ISBN: 0-7709-0202-2

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION: HUMANISM AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Suzanne Mackenzie

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These papers were first presented as part of a special session at the 1986 Ontario meetings of the Canadian Association of Geographers, held at Carleton University. Listening to them there was both an exhilarating and frustrating experience. There is exhilaration inherent in any meeting of people who are talking about a subject which is not only 'close to their hearts', but which is exciting interest - both critical and enthusiastic - within their disciplinary community. However much participants in such a discussion might disagree, these are occasions where the collective academic process is at work. At the same time, here is frustration inherent in the limited format of conference sessions. It is difficult to absorb a variety of complex ideas in a short time, while adhering to timetables which constrict presentation and discussion. It was this latter frustration, as well as a desire to give these papers the wider audience they deserve, which motivated their publication. It is hoped that more leisured consideration of the contents of this publication will provide us with the basis of future, and fruitful, discussion.

But evoking a 'basis for future discussion', so often the conclusion of academic works, is also both disturbing and stimulating. The combination of predominately 'rationalist' modes of thought and the institutional structures in which we work often lead us to want 'finished' concepts, to want ideas presented in refined and polished ways, enclosed in final and quotable form. This these papers do not provide. This is disturbing if we see science and academic life as a

series of discrete events; as incremental building blocks. But these papers are both stimulating and provocative if we see science and our lives as continual engagement, if we see the world - both its 'human' and 'environmental' aspects - as constantly changing, and see our concepts constantly attempting to encompass and understand this fluid reality. This is what the papers here attempt to do.

There are therefore few conclusions here, and very little that is quietly tethered in 'definitive' categories. Yet, there are some themes, arising out of the authors' common social and academic principles and their attempts to develop adequate concepts for understanding the social world. It is these themes which I wish to address in this introduction.

Session participants were initially invited to discuss the broad theme of 'humanism and geography', and the session as a whole was intended to explore two general questions. First, what is the nature of a humanist geography; i.e., what are the theoretical, methodological and empirical implications of humanist perspectives for the study of human-environmental relations? Second, what is the nature of a humanist geography; i.e. what are the implications of our concern for human-environmental relations for humanist theory, method and questions? Within these general themes, themselves begging a multitude of questions, participants defined their individual focus.

The paper which resulted from this invitation fall into three broad categories. The first three papers, those by Leonard Guelke, Ted Relph and James Lemon address, in very different ways, the relation between humanism and geography. They also come to very different conclusions. Leonard Guelke argues that the credibility and even the survival of geography as a scholarly discipline depends upon "a clear disciplinary framework within which analysis can proceed", and proposes that a humanist geography founded in an "idealist philosophy of history" can provide the basis for this. Ted Relph, in contrast, criticizes the humanist endeavour as ill-defined, creating particular problems when humanism is articulated to a discipline which is also ill-defined. He argues against a narrow "rationalism", but also against uncritical acceptance of humanism which he sees as itself too rationalistic and too "diffuse" to provide strategic insights into social problems. James Lemon, offering some "unsystematic critical thoughts", also argues against the concept of humanist geography, suggesting that concern with language and method is "trivial" in comparison with, and may distract us from, "everyday concrete issues".

The next three papers address specific aspects of 'humanism and geography'. David Knight addresses political geography, combining autobiography and assessment of literature to explore the relation between humanist geographers and their geographies. Focussing on issues of group identity and their territorial expression, he provides an "inclusive" definition of humanist political geography, while, like Ted Relph, raising questions about the significance and efficacy of the concepts he defines. Iain Wallace discusses Christian theology as a

foundation for humanism, and the relation between this and other forms of humanism. He argues that "a theological perspective on humanist geography calls for the...integration of three ontological dimensions of human existence": the materiality of human life, the centrality of human relations and the recognition by people that they are accountable. Like Ted Relph, David Knight and James Lemon, the focus of Iain Wallace's concern is the strategic understanding of the human condition and the social problems people create and encounter in living out these conditions.

The next three papers, although sharing concerns with the previous writers, explicitly address the question of methodologies in humanist geography, specifically the issue of the relation of 'humanism' and 'science'. Elaine Bjorklund suggests geographic semiotics as a bridge between humanism and science, and discusses the processes by which human beings construct mental models. She argues that these models are simultaneously the basis of individual experience and affect the way we deal with experience, and the "interpretation/explanation of [their] observable signitive evidence" is not only "a corner stone of geographic work", but provides the basis for a bridge "to unite positivistic and phenomenological approaches in geography." Audrey Kobayashi proposes that the "a philosophically sound basis for humanist geography" and for the "humanistic endeavour of situating human beings in concrete and fully examined contexts" requires a theory of language, specifically incorporating the understanding that landscape is language. She situates her discussion of language in the context of a combination of post-idealist and post-structuralist thinking, a combination which she argues "gives optimism for a theoretical extension of humanism in geography". Robin Kearns also adresses the bridging of science and humanism. Focussing on his research on the mentally ill in the inner city, he argues that, in practice, the "challenges posed by <u>the problem itself</u>...have led to a blend of scientific and humanistic influences" (emphasis in original). He propose a "compassionate methodology" and a view of 'human' which allow and extend this blending by effectively breaking down subject-object dualism.

Despite their different approaches and thematic concerns, all the authors engage what is perhaps the central methodological and sociological question of the 'humanist endeavour'. Simply stated, this is the question of how the humanist centreing of individual experience and agency can be effectively reconciled with large scale structural processes and with abstraction. Leonard Guelke sees historically given categories as the intersection between "individual life experience and the larger forces of history". The foundation of Ted Relph's concerns about humanism is the inadequacy of its concepts for fusing "abstract intelligence and ordinary, everyday reality" in an "attentive, critical" geography which effectively deals with social issues. James Lemon suggest we must examine the power of money in our existence, doing so as geographers without labels, critical of ourselves and our institutions. Concern for <u>effective</u> humanism is also the basis of Iain Wallace's discussion of the problems which an economy - "globally

integrated yet out of control" - creates for the relation between human agency and "macro-scale systemic actors...and tendencies". Audrey Kobayashi's concern is with transcending the "structure/human agency debate" and creating a "linkage between the singular and the universal...in order to produce understanding that is both incorporative and critical...." David Knight approaches this problem from the perspective of the relation between the researcher and research, exploring the concern for researchers' accountability as academics and citizens. Elaine Bjorklund and Robin Kearns also address this aspect of the question, the former in proposing an experience-centred methodological bridge and the latter in detailing methods for relating materiality with intersubjectivity in examination of people's relationships to environments.

The common concern for reconciling a material reality, intersubjectivity and individual agency sets the terms for another theme addressed in the papers: the implications of humanism for recasting geography's scholarly agenda. The lines of this altered agenda are not fixed, nor should they be in a philosophy which recognizes the mutability of both 'humans' and 'environments'. But two things are evident from these papers. Humanism is furthering the move from 'spatial science' to the study of human-environmental relations (while not implying a rejection of the insights, or even some of the methodologies of the former). Humanism therefore also incorporates a consistent concern for integrating human values and researchers' principles, as these are grounded in material, intersubjective reality, with rigourous research. (This is also a concern in recent historical materialist work. Sayer (1979) is a seminal statement).

This collection is not a homogeneous one. Some of the authors are working within a humanist tradition and combine their empirical and social concerns with philosophical and methodological ones. Others criticize, or are even angered by this philosophical and methodological debate. There is also wide variation in the styles of presentation, which itself reflects the differing committments and conclusions of the authors.

The primary problem, not only for humanists but for all principled researchers - that of reconciling what we do as people with how we talk about it as academics and citizens - remains. It provides a thread of continuity, not only in the diversity of this collection, but will continue to motivate our future work. However much we may wish for definitive statements, we must still be satisfied with a disciplinary discourse which is wide open, often heated and, above all, full of ideas on how to grapple with humans' relations to environments.

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GEOGRAPHY AS A HUMANIST ENTERPRISE

Leonard Guelke

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Introduction

The humanist geographer has objectives that are very different from those of the pragmatic or applied geographer. He/She is not concerned with manipulation or prediction or with solving problems as such. The idea that problems exist and how they are identified is already attached to the particular value systems of those defining them. The humanist is concerned with the deeper levels of human and social existence. The essential task of a humanist analysis is the evaluation of meaning in its broadest sense. In a geographical context this means that the humanist geographer tries to show how human activities on the land, or human forms of life, cohere as an intellectual synethesis of theory and practice.

The idea of intellectual curiosity as the stimulus to knowledge is very much a part of the humanist view of the world. The humanist is also a scientist in the sense of searching for objective knowledge or truth. A humanist geographer is not a poet who has a license to create freely, but a scholar concerned to elucidate and understand what exists already, not by inventing categories but rather by understanding the implications of existing categories and ideas. This quest for understanding goes hand in hand with empirical investigation of human forms of life and the collection of evidence on which interpretation will rest. Although the way an interpretation is conceived differs from the way natural and social scientists go about seeking explanations in terms of theories and laws, the idea that knowledge

must be grounded on empirically-verifiable evidence is not abandoned. This principle does not mean a humanist cannot go beyond the evidence, but it does place limits on the extent to which speculation will be tolerated.

The success of a humanist geography conceived of as an intellectual activity depends very much on it being able to make a distinctive contribution to knowledge. In the period of the quantitative revolution the idea of geography having a distinctive domain of study was weakened. Many geographers were not concerned about the geographical character of their work, and abandoned a long tradition of geographical scholarship concerned with human activity on the earth in its regional variations. In the absence of a clear sense of discipline geographers spread themselves over the academic map. This lack of any strong disciplinary vision remained even though the logical positivist view of explanation was abandoned by many.

The critical problem of geography is not a lack of approaches, methods, technique or theory, but rather a lack of a clear disciplinary framework within which analysis can proceed. When faced with evidence of the academic weakness of their discipline, geographers have often sought to develop stronger techniques or have emphasized the applied value of their work. A strategy which emphasized technique might make geography and geographers more useful, but it would not address the key issue of the credibility of geography as a scholarly discipline. Geography as a discipline is not found in many leading American universities not because it lacks techniques or theories, but because it lacks intellectual stature. No strong universities have eliminated the discipline of history because it has few obvious practical applications.

An historical approach to meaning

A human geography conceived of as the historical study of human forms of life could provide the kind of intellectual foundation the discipline of geography needs to ensure an intellectually stronger and more cohesive discipline. The importance of history lies in its concern with the presuppositions underlying society. The presuppositions of a society are based upon the historical experience of that society. It is precisely because the historical experiences of the earth's people have varied so much that generalizations about human activity are so difficult to make. The task of the geographer is not to redo the work of historians, but rather to show how historical factors have shaped the geography of a given people or region. It is scarcely possible to study human geography in an intellectual way without an historical point of view, because the events of the past are kept alive by the actions of those directly and indirectly affected by them. Canada differs in many important aspects from the United States, not because of biological differences between Americans and Canadians, but because the peoples of these lands have had different historical experiences which are reflected in different sets of values.

In advocating a central role for history one parts company with both postivists and Marxists. In the words of Lasch:

> Anyone who insists on the historical importance of human actions, and who sees history not as an abstract social "process" but as the product of concrete struggles for power, finds himself at odds with the main tradition of the social sciences, which affirms the contrary principle that society runs according to laws of its own (Lasch, 1977, p.xi).

Yet history is not without order. The concrete struggles for power do not take place in an intellectual vacuum, but are located in specific historical contexts. An historical context is not primarily a physial context, but a context of ideas. Every human society is organized on certain principles, which provide a common understanding in terms of which people organize their lives.

The principles of a social order that are considered unchangeable by the people living under them are often referred to as reality. Such a designation is indeed fully justified. In days of slavery a person might well have been told: "The reality is - you're a slave". This statement, and others like it, seek to define the limits of freedom an individual has in a specific historical situation. The important point is that such limits are the historical creations of human minds, they are not inevitable attributes of the human condition.

The "reality" of human situations is not unchanging. The principles on which societies are organized have changed as a result of historical struggles for power. Such power struggles are essentially struggles over ideas, and over the implications of ideas that are accepted. Or, in other words, history is essentially a rational development, in which human minds have applied their intelligence to a variety of problems, which are themselves defined within a specific constellation of assumptions.[1] This means that the history of the world and its peoples has a coherence and logic to it. This coherence is not an external coherence, but an internal one based entirely on the thought of individual human beings, who share ideas about the reality they have created. There is no point in trying to impose a pattern on history, because any pattern one devises will not fit: history is not a process (Guelke, 1982).

An example of an historical evolution can be seen in the rise and fall of Western colonial rule. At the start it was based on assumptions of European superiority, which was reflected in their superior technology and arms. The idea of superiority was not something peripheral to colonial rule; it was of its essence. The European rulers believed in their superiority with a genuine and unshakable fervor. The power of their ideas mainfested itself in the creation of two societies in the colonial realm: Europeans and natives. The people colonized were marginalized, as Frans Fannon (1968) has so well described, by the ideas the European imposed on

their colonies. Yet once the reality of colonial rule was imposed, it sowed the seeds of its own destruction. In Hegelian fashion we might almost conceive of its history in terms of the triad: thesis-antithesis-synthesis.

Another point I wish to develop is the notion of historical reality being based on a set of imperfect ideas. Ideas provide the basis on which solutions to whatever happen to be perceived as current problems are sought. These solutions produce in turn new problems from their unanticipated consequences. Thus the historical development of a people can be conceived of as a logical evolution which is essentially open ended because no individual has the wisdom or power to know what the long term consequences of particular actions might be. But although this point is acknowledged, history is in essence a rational process, because the solutions to problems are grounded in a historical reality and seek to achieve specific objectives using ideas as weapons; or one might say: "The pen is mightier than the sword".

Geography and historical analysis

Where does geography fit in here? The special mandate of human geography is to understand human forms of life. The geographer is interested in the lived experiences of ordinary people. This lived experience is, in turn, a function of an individuals or group's historic vision of itself. It is at this point the individual life experience and the larger forces of history intersect. An individual can only experience life through the categories history has given him or her. No individual, no matter how brilliant, can leap outside his or her historical frame of reference or think in categories unrelated to his/her historical era. In brief, life is a historical experience and must be understood as such in its specific contexts.

The special nature of human society and culture is precisely its intellectual dimension. An animal experiences life as a series of sensations of pleasure or pain. Human beings differ from all other species, because they have created a fully-independent intellectual world. As animals they experience emotions, like any other animal - the basic drives of life; but unlike any other species these experiences have been made subservient to the intellect. They have been classified and given intellectual meaning. This intellectual dimension of human life is the basis of humanist approaches in the social sciences.

The intellectual dimension of human life is, as I have sought to argue here, given meaning in a historical frame of reference. It is through history that a myriad of individual experiences can be given a larger meaning and placed in a broader context. In fact, no experiences can really be understood outside of their historical contexts, which provide the intellectual assumptions on which they are based. The historical context gives all human experience a coherence, which it otherwise lacks. History must replace theory in humanist geography, if humanist studies are to be more than a series of unrelated subjective views of the world.

The current work by many humanist geographers lacks an adequate historical grounding and explores subjective dimensions of the life experience in ways that emphasize its uniqueness. Such studies suffer from all the problems associated with traditional regional geography, and more. After the experience of an individual or group has been described in all its subjectivity what else is to be said? Unless the experience of individuals can be connected to each other there is no basis of an intellectual scientific discipline. Positivists and Marxists have recognized the need to have a broader frame of reference for individual case studies, but this need has to a large extent gone unrecognized by the humanist geographer. Without some historical context geographers are left with a bewildering variety of unconnected and unconnectable individual experiences, and those who practice such geography are engaged in a kind of intellectual embroidery closer to poetry than to science. [2]

History and Coherence

A recognition of the crucial role of history, as a basis for connecting individual case studies, on its own is not enough. History must be seen to be founded on ideas and reason if intelligible connections among an almost infinite number of individual actions are to be successfully made. This concept of history demands more than the ability to synthesize, although such an ability is of great importance. The critical need is for the scholar to see history as the self-development of reason (Hegel, 1953), because it is this idea that provides the integrating principle which allows him/her to connect individual case studies to each other however remote in space and time.

Although the objective of an intellectual human geography is to bring order to an enormous variety of human experiences of life and endow them with intellectual meaning, this task is primarily an analytical one rather than an exercise in synthesis (Harris, 1971). If we take life as it is lived by members of specific social groups, their lives are already a synthesis of the ideas they have assimilated. The form of life a group has fashioned is the concrete reflection of a constellation of ideas on practically every facet of life and existence. The geographer's task, like that of most scientists, is to analyse, to split apart the various ideas reflected in concrete actions. Synthesis involves showing how the specific ideas are related to broader themes, but this task can only be accomplished after careful and incisive analysis has been achieved. It is a mistake to see human geography as some kind of special synthesizing field. Human geography like most disciplines is primarily an analytical endeavour.

A geographical humanist analysis is not aimed at making ethical judgements; but rather elucidating the meaning of a phenomenon in its historical context. Thus, for example, the analysis of the widespread poverty in the United States would be approached from a perspective of the organizing principles on which that society is based. The existence of poverty is in many respects the other side of a concept of

freedom in which individuals are held accountable for their own actions and by implication in control of their own destinies. It matters not whether these ideas are true in any absolute sense, but only whether they are believed and by whom. These beliefs of the social order, of rich and poor, will define the place of individuals within society as a whole and shape the meaning of their lives. The humanist geographer discharges his intellectual role not by preaching or passing ethical judgements, but rather by showing how a specific form of life came into existence and how it is sustained by the beliefs of the people who are part of it. The goal is to understand human values in the historical contexts and to analyse the implications of these values in concrete case studies. An intellectual analysis will change the world only to the extent that it can provide a lucid intellectual commentary on the meaning of existing forms of life. If individuals can see themselves and others as the outcome of historical power struggles they might be more inclined to be more tolerant citizens of the world by having a deeper understanding of it.

Conclusion

An idealist philosophy of history provides the basis of an intellectual humanist geography. This humanist geography is founded on the premise that human forms of life are intellectual creations of human minds, and that the human mind itself is the product of the historical development of reason. Historical change can be construed as the dialectical development of mind in a form that is close to Hegel's notion of thesis-antithesis-synthesis. The essence of human history is change, and as the fundamental ideas and assumptions of societies have changed, so have their forms of life. A form of life is created and destroyed by the intellectual forces of historical change. The central task of human geography is to connect the experience of life to its historical roots, to show how peoples' life forms and everyday life are experienced in their specifically human dimension. Such an analysis must relate individual life to environment and society in terms of its unique historical contexts and probe its intellectual meaning. [3]

NOTES

[1] R.G. Collingwood makes this point well in his Idea of History (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), pp. 220-28.

[2] Yi-Fu Tuan has developed a highly esoteric style in many of his works, e.g. Yi-Fu Tuan, Segmented Worlds and Self (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1982).

[3] The point's made in this paper have been developed at greater length in L. Guelke, "Forms of Life, History and Mind: An Idealist Manifesto for Human Geography," (forthcoming).

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PROBLEMS WITH THE NEW HUMANISM

Edward Relph

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First the case of the granny flats in Waterloo. This recent planning proposal and citizen protest seems to me to reveal a deep problem in the attitudes some people have come to hold towards their own lives. It can serve as a focus for considering some of the problems of humanism and humanistic geography.

The Ministry of Housing of Ontario has an experimental programme for housing senior citizens in portable units - granny flats - which are one bedroom, cedar sided, temporary buildings installed in the backyard of the house of a relative. They give an elderly person independence and the freedom to escape from grandchildren, while allowing close family involvement and care. When the occupant dies or has to go to a nursing home the unit is removed. Several of these units have been installed in Ottawa, Sudbury and Waterloo, but when a proposal was made earlier this year to put one in the backyard of a house on one of the exclusive executive one acre lots of the Colonial Acres development in Waterloo a major local protest resulted. Three hundred residents signed a petition claiming that this would infringe zoning and erode the character of the community and property values. Backyard units (other than garden sheds and swimming pool change rooms) were wholly unacceptable, even though on the one acre lots they would be scarcely visible to the neighbours. Remarkably some of the most outspoken protesters were themselves senior citizens, who, one might reasonably have assumed, would be delighted to be able to live in a granny flat in a few years time.

To anyone who has experience of local politics this sort of protest will be familiar. It involved the sort of reaction that was invariably generated, for instance, by proposals for group homes when those still were discussed at public meetings. In this case what is significant to me is that it reveals a remarkable ability on the part of the protesters to deny the reality of their own lives and the inexorable fact of their own aging. Of course some allowance has to be made for the snowball emotionalism that is created by local protests, but the reactions seem to be out of all proportion to the proposals. The only real arguments made were about the threats to "the character of the neighbourhood" and to property values. The former concern makes little sense in terms of a single temporary unit hidden away in a backyard, and while the latter concern is understandable for people who have just paid $200,000 for a house, it is probably unwarranted because property values are remarkably insensitive to environmental changes.

Protests of this sort usually involve a great deal of ignorance and confusion. My own experience in community politics suggest that many individuals are deeply critical of planners for not exercising more control and directing developments more effectively, yet resist any attempt which would control or change their own corner of the world. This self-serving propertyism is well-known. In the case of the granny flats this must have played a role, but my sense is that something deeper and unarticulated was at work, and that was a fear of the unfamiliar, the possibility that something uncontrolled and untoward might happen, they might grow old. This could be stretching things a bit, but the protest does seem to have been both a local struggle for security and future certainty, and to have involved a denial of a fundamental fact of the protesters' humanity - their own mortality.

What does this local protest have to do with humanism? Well, assume for the purposes of argument that I am a humanistic geographer. What sense do I make of the attitudes of these people and of this situation from a humanistic geographical perspective? If I am right about the denial of aging there are all sorts of issues and problems implied here which warrant explication, even if they are pretty small stuff by comparison with toxic pollution, terrorism, star wars, endemic political torture and chronic famine. If I can't worry something out of the granny flats case by reference to humanism it seems unlikely that it is going to offer much clarification of the larger issues. It takes little knowledge of Marxism, for example, to realise that a marxist argument could clarify the role of property in all of this, the conversion of everything to exchange values, the attitudes of the bourgeoisie. Or an existential argument could make much of the fear of the unfamiliar, an economist might measure the costs and benefits of he proposals, an environmental geographer might examine their environmental and social impacts; I can even imagine a Giddens enthusiast exploring the changing relationships between the differently constructed social realities of the planners, the developers and the residents.

But how does humanism clarify this case? How does it clarify my thinking about it? How might it clarify how I should have acted if I owned a house in Colonial Acres? How, indeed, does it clarify anything? The fact that I ask these questions of course indicates that I have doubts about the possible answers, so I must state immediately that I am sympathetic to the direction of the concerns expressed by humanistic geographers, I do believe that there are serious injustices, violence and ugliness in the world which stem in large measure from the application of narrow rationalistic ways of thinking. My doubts have to do with whether humanism in general, and humanistic geography in particular, provide any levers to undo or counteract these ways of thinking, or whether they merely serve to obfuscate things by creating a cloud of nice sounding sentiments. I emphasise clarity partly because I admire the philosophical arguments of Wittgenstein and Heidegger about the importance of clarity in thought and language, and partly because clarity seems to be the least we can ask of any philosophy, set of concepts, methods, models, declarations of hope, or faith or conviction. If a philosophy or method does not reduce confusions by giving some order to things, by providing a sense of direction and purpose, or by removing the underbrush then it's hard to understand why we should bother with them.

So what does humanism clarify? Note first and in general that it is entirely contradictory to adopt humanism as a act of conviction, sentiment or faith, to cling to it emotionally as some sort of light in dark times. Whatever else might be understood by humanism it has its roots in classical philosophy and the rationalism of the Renaissance, and in all its many guises humanism maintains an emphasis on the preeminence of human reason. It is clearly possible to choose humanism only through a rational decision, which means that the grounds for choosing must always be capable of articulation.

Allow me to articulate what I know of humanism. First of all there is no seminal work or body of literature which can be clearly identified as humanist (by seminal I mean something like Das Kapital, Being and Time, the discoveries of Newton). I know of no philosophers who described themselves primarily as humanists, and while some modern writers apparently feel happy about calling John Stuart Mill, John Ruskin and others "humanistic economists" or whatever, this approach of slapping labels on the dead seems to me to be very dubious since they have no opportunity to refuse them. Secondly, there is no widely acknowledged humanist manifesto, nor is there a group like the Frankfurt group in which the discussion of humanism has been centred. Perhaps this diffuse character is its strength, for it could mean that its principles are widely shared. But this also makes it hard to find a set of ideas which most self-proclaimed humanists would espouse and which everyone else does not also espouse; in other words it is hard to find anything distinctive in humanism. Shoukry Roweis, for instance, in his paper "Can There Be A Humanist Social Science?", casts about to find some consistent ideas in humanism and then suggests these - the discovery of the good life, the perfectibility of humans, the capacity for commitment and acts of will, and a quest for value and moral order

(Roweis, 1986). Though he certainly did not intend this, and I am aware that I do his paper a disservice by taking ideas out of context, it is hard to read such a list without thinking of it as some sort of neo-conservative manifesto, the sort of thing Margaret Thatcher would love.

In other words, it seems to be impossible to answer he question - "Who is not a humanist?" Adoption of ideas like commitment, conviction and self-fulfilment simply do not identify a humanist. Kenneth Boulding points out that Hitler was one of the most committed and self-fulfilled people in modern history, yet he was the very antithesis of what humanism professes (Boulding 1979). You might, of course, argue that this is not what is meant by commitment, that you mean something different. But what could that difference be? Is there good commitment and bad commitment? What are the criteria for distinguishing these? How do they differ from what you simply like and dislike? Perhaps humanism is, in fact, no more than a convenient, nice sounding academic label that allows humanists to protest what they think is wrong with the world and to do what they like to do. How does this differ except in scale from what happened at Colonial Acres with individuals protesting the ogre of granny flats by raising motherhood concerns of property values and community character?

A major problem with humanism is that it does serve as a flag of convenience. It has occasionally been touted as an independent philosophy, but usually occurs as a variant of some other approach. Thus there are books on Scientific Humanism, Liberal Humanism, Christian Humanism, Atheistic Humanism, Existential Humanism and Marxist Humanism. In the last decade or so these pairings have undergone an inversion, and now we read of humanistic psychology, humanistic sociology, humanistic economics and humanistic geography. I am not sure if this flip is significant. My cynical worst guess, however, and this is partly derived from Heidegger's profound criticisms in his "Letter on Humanism" (1977), is that the final demise of any vital idea may be in its enthroning as an academic subdiscipline.

Humanistic geography seems to be an especially problematic pairing, beause geography itself is so ill-defined. The fragmentations and confusions inherent in geography do, of course, have merits of flexibility and adaptability for geographers, but if geography is combined with the confusions that seem to lie in humanism it is hard to avoid the sense that two confusions are being compounded. Furthermore, geography, almost however defined, does accord some status to environment, yet humanism in its concern with human commitment and will is avowedly anthropocentric. This is a difficult tension to resolve without abandoning many of the precepts that are usually accorded to humanism.

Thus far, then, I find little in humanism or humanistic geography that clarifies anything, and few ideas to which I can cling with confidence. Yet the evidence is that there is a broad upwelling of

sentiment and argument for some alternative or new approach to social science and environmental design. Locally this is most obvious in the foundation earlier this year of the Centre for Advanced Research in Humanist Social Science in Waterloo (which thereby becomes the focal place in my argument by sheer chance).

I would like to feel part of what might be called The New Humanism, I would like to feel able to give my undiluted support to this Centre and its goals, but my doubts keep on getting in the way. From the newsletter summarising opinions about the conference that was held to celebrate the opening of the Centre I gather that the main thrust behind the new humanism is an opposition to positivism (characterised by one participant as "the enemy"). Positivism apparently means whatever is detached in social science (I suspect that is intended to include spatial analysis, econometrics, social physics, behaviourism). I find this sloppy, a casual casting of aspersions, a sort of academic propagandism. It seems to amount to little more than declaring that anyone whose work I don't like I will call a positivist. It would be nice if the world and its inhabitants were this simple. Hitler was committed, and Eichmann was detached; but Gandhi and Martin Luther King were also deeply committed, and detachment is in some sense the foundation of our legal system, the way we must grade student papers, and even of coming to terms with our outbursts of anger or dealing with childrens' squabbles. In the case of the granny flats at Colonial Acres who was more committed and who more detached? It is difficult not to conclude that the commitment of the property owners was not self-serving and narrow-minded, whereas the detachment of the planners with their positivist methods was altogether reasonable. I need more than vague perjorative characterisations to tell me what is involved in positivism. I know some self-proclaimed positivists, a rare breed though they are, and they are reasonable people who love their children and are interested in the welfare of their fellow humans. The points of disagreement between their thinking and mine are neatly captured in C.S. Lewis' description of a character in one of his novels as someone to whom statistics of population and agricultural production had become more real than the actual farmers and fields (he later realised the error of his thought-ways and learnt to see people as themselves).

I do not want to underestimate the importance of these differences of outlook, for they can and have had a great effect on the world and on our lives. A telling case from the realm of nuclear strategy has been related by a researcher for the SALT One talks who became accustomed to marking out on maps the consequences of various strategies with pins which represented so many megadeaths; it was little more than an amusing intellectual game. One day his wife asked him if he realised that he was dealing with real people and actual deaths, he had a flash of insight and resigned the following day to found the nuclear protest group Ground Zero. The point I wish to make here is that people do not fall neatly into categories; however we choose to understand the terms, each of us is to some degree a positivist and to some degree a humanist, each of us is to some degree

palpable realities. The real challenge, especially for academics who as a group are professionally inclined to drift into abstraction and generalisation, is to maintain the balance.

If the New Humanism can find a way to bridge the wide gap between abstract intelligence and ordinary, everyday reality then I will have nothing but support for it. At the moment, however, what I read about are mostly fine hopes, based on a despair at all the nasty things in the world yet lacking philosophical or intellectual clarity, and already drifting into a new set of vague generalisations and calls for theory. If this is just another academic boondoggle, the basis for yet more journals and articles about methods, I do not want to be part of it. Surely the point is to change the world, or a least ways of thinking about the world, without slipping into the same problems of detachment, grand theorising and totalisation of which positivism is accused. Shoukry Roweis' formulation of this was that social science has its origins in the hospitals, prisons, factories and streets, and should try to maintain a sense of these origins by aiming for the improvement of everyday life for everyday people. I would add that this must involve a continuing struggle to look carefully at and think clearly about particular situations and the people involved in them, and to try always to be aware of both the immediate and distant implications of one's thoughts and actions.

No doubt I can be accused of false representation. It might be claimed that the new humanists are struggling to come to terms with such issues, and I have chosen examples to make my negative comments while dismissing other evidence. That's probably true. I can only restate that I am genuinely sympathetic to what humanistic geographers and economists and others seem to be trying to achieve, but I do have deep doubts about whether the manner of argument they use is an improvement on what they are criticising. Perhaps this means that I am a closet humanist too timid to leap onto the bandwagon. I do know that so long as I can find nothing in humanism which clarifies my own life and thinking there is no point in my coming out of the closet. In the meantime I will struggle to maintain some clear sense of what is real and what is an imposed abstraction by looking at and thinking about everyday lives and landscapes with all their imperfections and muddle-headedness. This is easy to say and hard to do, and I need some intellectual supports. For these I confess that I find more substance in a single phrase of John Ruskin's than in all the arguments of humanism and humanistic geography. He wrote that "There is no wealth but life" (Ruskin, 1962).

Post-Conference Postscript

This paper was described by Jim Lemon as being diffident, a bit off-handed. Someone else asked whether there is anything about which I am angry. These comments indicate the dificulties that are bound to arise with criticising what seems to be a promising new philosophy or approach for geographers. They also point to what I think is the essential problem of humanism.

There are many things about which I am angry - economic and social injustices on local and global scales, corporate conspicuous consumption as manifest in everything from expense account trips to flashy office buildings, rationalistic development and planning that lays out a world of uncompromising straight lines, the insensitivities of most economics to particular places and people, environmental degradation for quick profit-taking, political imprisonments and torture and executions, mindless terrorist bombings, putting abstractions and ideologies (I do not care whose) ahead of specific realities, the scientists who sell themselves to biological warfare or Star Wars, buildings with windows that don't open and have recirculated quasi-poisonous air, new roads which destroy old communities. The list goes on and on. What is at issue is not the range of things about which we are or need to be angry. What is at issue is the means by which we can focus that anger and accomplish some changes for the better, and specifically whether humanism has anything to offer in this.

It is worth repeating that I am generally sympathetic to what I think are the concerns of the New Humanists, but I cannot see how humanism can either give many insights into the nature of these sorts of problems, or accomplish effective changes. The problems are complex; many of them stem from an excessive rationalism and remember that humanism is above all rational; others stem from ponderous institutional practices and humanism says little about these; yet others are hidden from public view and have to be extricated and made visible by "positivist" scientific methods. Acid rain and dioxin, or for that matter nuclear missile silos and much urban poverty, are pretty well invisible. I don't know how humanism will make them visible.

Humanism, and its diminutive - humanistic geography - are filled with splendid intentions but are so diffuse that they seem unable to clarify the sources of problems or to offer hard nosed solutions to what are undeniably hard nosed problems. Certainly they seem to offer no more than, say, socialist geography, critical analysis or even phenomenological criticisms. The hopes of humanism are, for me, dangerously close to being false hopes. Why, then, should we encumber ourselves with another label, another -ism, which offers a shelter for our concerns and our anger but apparently nothing more than that?

It is far preferable to keep our senses alert so that we are not deceived by what politicians and experts tell us, to try to think critically and act carefully with regard to specific issues, to find ways of making persuasive arguments for alternative ways of planning towns and managing environments, and to promote these through talking, teaching, writing, making legal challenges, participating in demonstrations, and struggling to maintain some sort of consistency between what we say and what we do. None of this is especially easy, not least because the problems are multi-faceted and are continually changing their forms. I believe that there is no handbook or simple method or philosophy, humanist or otherwise, which can tell us what to

think and to do. I stand, instead, for nameless geography that is attentive, critical, concerned with social justice, and deals with specific issues on the basis, first, of a philosophical awareness of the difficulties inherent in trying to devise systems of thought and language, and, secondly, of a close observation of actual places.

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HUMANISTIC GEOGRAPHY: SOME UNSYSTEMATIC CRITICAL THOUGHTS

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How and why we have embraced such a diffuse and meaningless term as humanistic geography are interesting if not very important questions [1]. Apparently the term arose in reaction to what was seen as positivistic, analytical numerical/algebraic/geometric-dominated economic and urban geographies. Everything that was not these was thrown into this new category. To this rather innocent participant and observer, the term embraced structural marxist geography, historical geography, philosophical geography, cultural geography, phenomenological geography, religous geography, and on and on. Perhaps some held a more precise meaning: to bring vitality, to bring flesh and blood to a human geography drained of emotion, engagement and symbol by the relentless drive to reduce everything to a functionalism defined by mathematical formulae or to tables of figures. The more precise humanistic geographers, whoever they are or were, seemed on the verge of expelling not only the positivists but most everyone from human geography who somehow did not fit. But human geography in all its diverse and confusing realities has survived.

What little I have read under the more precise category or what I have, unwittingly and uncritically, instinctively put within the group adds up to truncation of human experience. In its reactionary stance it too has tended to reduce experience to feeling, or put more abstractly, to the aesthetic. Curiously the everyday experience of people has been drained of social, political and economic content. Despite the eloquence and verbal elegance of some - equal to the models of the spatial theoreticians - the humanists seem just as remote from the world which is still kept at arm's length through the fancy language(s) employed. Its practitioners have failed or refused to situate the objects of discussion in historical contexts. Landscapes, the central code word, is reduced to space once again. Another code word, "intersubjective", becomes vacuous. It reminds one of the many

systematic theologies that are remote from the messy, confusing, inconsistent and contradictory base from which they are purportedly developed, the canon of holy writ.

In focussing on the historical, I *intend a focus on institutions*, or more specifically on how institutions developed and how all action by human beings is mediated through the language of institutions. The books of the Bible were canonized through power struggles within very messy, confusing, inconsistent and contradictory institutions; the temple and the church. A major job is to translate the esoteric languages of specialized professions within institutions to everyday language. To undertake that we strive to understand how esoteric and controlling languages emerge. Put another way, and with G.B. Shaw, our task is seeking how the professionals' conspiracy against the laity was laid on the rest of us.

The humanistic attack on positivistic language is trivial when compared to the needed shaking out of the language of business and the legislative and legal apparatus protecting the power of business. At the centre is the complex of ever-changing organizations, agencies and bodies designed to protect and enhance the power of money. For most, if not all people, money is the measure of all things - all things meaning status and power. As always, the politics of money is as great a preoccupation as the politics of sex, meaning the struggle between men and women.

But today money has become even more central in our existence than twenty years ago, when for academics and others the world of possibilities was wider. What money or the lack of money does is extremely visible in our time: the power of money has led our society toward wasteful corporate mergers but also - to a degree not seen since the 1930s - toward an increasing separation between the rich and poor. Academics who fall in the upper range are protective of their bourgeois life-styles. Enjoyment of romantic landscapes (or rather romantic enjoyment of landscapes) has become available only to the idle rich. Yet fear of threatening environments has become more available too as those with a modest amount of power have allowed those with more to control landscapes. (I include here the failure to protect against natural disaster).

Academics are in a relatively protected and privileged position: our role is that of critic, of ourselves and the institutions in which we live. Let us talk about everyday concrete issues rather than speculating about trivial matters. Let us forget the phrase humanistic geography, call ourselves geographers (denoting that we are concerned about what we and what others do and have done through money to places, landscapes, environments and spaces), and stop fussing about objective versus subjective and all such abstract divisions.

NOTE

[1] Stephen Daniels provides some useful insights in "Arguments for a Humanistic Geography" in Johnston, R.J., editor, The Future of Geography (London and New York: Methuen, 1985), pp. 143-158.

HUMANISTIC POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY?

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With respect to humanistic geography I have more questions than answers. Accordingly, the title of this paper has a question mark - "humanistic political geography?" When Suzanne Mackenzie invited me to prepare a paper for this symposium I was not sure where to start. To date the phrase humanistic political geography has not been used in print so it was not possible to fall back on quoting what other political geographers have written. After the questions for this paper had been formed I received a draft of a forthcoming paper on "towards a humanistic political geography" by Stanley Brunn and Ernie Yanarella that included mention of some of my work. The big question then became, for me, am I a humanistic political geographer? How was I to examine this question? This paper traces some of my thinking. The approach taken is autobiographical as the question of whether or not I am a humanistic political geographer is examined. These ruminations then lead me to consider points made by others before I return to the fundamental question of whether or not there is a humanistic political geography. Sometimes insight can come from personal retrospective explorations and perhaps such is the case here, but judgement on this point I leave to the reader.

What is humanistic geography? I am not at all sure, for when I turn to others for guidance there is no ready agreement on just what is meant by those words. Is it, simply, all that is not positivist in thrust? David Ley (1981, p. 250) suggested that the humanist movement in geography "represented a reaction against the quantitative juggernaut of spatial analysis as it gathered speed in the 1960s." I vividly recall, as a student during the 1960s, of being tempted by the seductive ease of Haggett's seemingly so logical Locational Analysis in Human Geography (1966) yet also being unsatisfied with some of its logic because of my growing commitment to trying to understand the

linkages between group identity and territory. My search for understanding of the linkages partly emerged from a personal need to appreciate why I had suffered from both "culture shock" and to what I call "locational shock" each time after I moved from one country to another. Part of who I was found expression in who I was told to be, thus, in New Zealand I was a New Zealander. In contrast, while I was in Scotland during three different periods and later in the U.S.A. and then Canada, each particular "society" suggested elements of identity for me to be linked to that were, at very least, cultural-historical and locational in nature.

As a geographer seeking to better understand my personal world view, as developed from the New Zealand perspective, I explored something of how a group's sense of self can change through time, in part because of a maturing of that society from within but also because of changing external factors. By undertaking that study I came to better understand some elements of the way I then looked at the world. The notion of "location shock" came to me during a short visit to New Zealand in 1969, after an absence of ten years. It was only when I was back in Dunedin, reading local newspapers, that I suddenly realized why I had been having difficulties in North America - I had never fully given up thinking of the world from the perspective of my New Zealand world view! Once that realization hit home I was then better able to deal with the reality of living in North America. In arriving at this realization, was I operating as a humanistic geographer who was seeking to understand elements of what Yi-Fu Tuan (1976, p. pp. 267-269) has called "geographical knowledge" and "territory and place", both of which he states form aspects of humanistic geography?

The notion of group identities, at sub-state and state levels, and tracing how they can develop had earlier found incipient expression in research I did on early colonial presence in the Gold Coast, West Africa, (under the guidance of a marvelous mentor, Professor Hildegard Binder Johnson), and later explicity in a political geographic examination of the formation of a trans-tribal Batswana raison d'etre for their southern African state. My findings on the latter topic gained new perspectives later, once I had come through the personal experience of better understanding my own identity relative to location. The Botswana study dealt with how a particular group of people - the state's elite - "saw" their people's place in the world and constructed a philosophy that formed the basis of a state idea. The formulation was somewhat idealist in nature yet the elites then took that formulation and linked it to dominant constructs within the culture, using them to make developmental plans have meaning for the general populous. Given that focus, and the research method of using the written and spoken words of the elites themselves to construct what seemed to be the fundamental philosophical basis of their group identity, was I being inherently humanist in my approach?

In the later research on the Canadian seat of government site selection issue I again sought to understand political elites operating

within a political process. In contrast to the then popular but sterile "political geography without politics" approach (to use Ron Johnston's, 1980, phrase) my work was dynamically political inasmuch as it explored how people perceived, spoke about and reacted to certain places, traced how politicians voted for and against those places, and examined why they voted as they did by analyzing the dynamics, tensions, opportunities and constraints that had at their basis questions of power, political alignments, identity with varying senses of "place" and, implicitly, "world" views. Again I ask in hindsight, was I operating as a humanistic political geographer in that research? I am not sure that I was, at least explicitly!

In more recent work on territorial expressions of group-identity linkages I have been exploring "real world" patterns and theoretical implications of the notion of hierarchical attachments to varying abstractions of identity within politically bounded territory. One major outcome of that research was the focus on the logical (at least for me) linkage between group identities, territory, control, and self-determination. Implicit in all of this research are questions of social justice and searches for security. With the need to closely examine concepts of "self" from the perspectives of individuals and groups and the resulting conceptions of the way the world ought to be, versus what is, the work also has led me to address fundamental issues of human rights. The very words human rights imply a sense of standards, of order, but whose standards and whose order? Examinations of self-determination for separatist groups, as in Canada over the past decade, or observations made in Basque country this past summer, have brought me into dealing with others' passions, feelings, desires for power and control, concepts of world order, and so much more. Does this mean that my work is humanistic in nature?

Why might I have developed the research and teaching interests I have? This paper need not become psychoanalytical to answer this question! All that needs to be said is that obviously I have been responding to a variety of interlinked factors: family, schooling, travel experiences, job opportunities, religious faith, and so much more. Through it all, basic attributes of <u>my</u> "being" and <u>my</u> "world view" are being expressed. It is not by chance that I have been concerned with understanding Botswana's multiracial state, with exploring the philosophical and practical issues involved with trans-racial adoption in Canada, with seeking to understand identity-territory linkages, with examining future conceptions of a world order from the perspective of peoples now denied full expressions of their group-self, with considering questions on human rights. But do these considerations make me a humanistic geographer or, indeed, a humanistic political geographer? Is there any other term that could be used to describe my orientation?

Carleton University's graduate brochures, calendars, etc., refer to me as a political and cultural geographer, and, indeed, I teach courses with such titles and publish things that by convention are

considered to be "cultural" (for instance, on perceptions of place, cemetery landscapes, and landscapes of heaven) or "political". But there is overlap, with considerable cross-fertialization, in my graduate course (on "Territory and Territoriality") most notably and of course in publications (for example, on ideology and landscape). Marvin Mikesell (1984, p. 202) has suggested that the word "hybrid" applies. All of my work, in various ways, explores the role of attitudes, values and behaviours. Some geographers hold that having such concerns to the fore means I am therefore a "behavioural" geographer, but I am on record as noting that this title does not sit well with me since all human geographers deal with behaviour to some degree (Aitken, 1985, p. 7). If the words behavioural geography are of no use then perhaps I really must be a humanistic geographer, a term that may transcend the variety of sub-field categories our discipline uses. But given this tentative conclusion perhaps it is best to ask just what humanistic geography is and how I relate to what others say it is?

Yi-Fu Tuan (1976, p. 266) suggested that humanistic geography reflects upon geographical phenomena with the ulimate purpose of achieving a better understanding of human beings and their condition. He indicated that humanistic geography achieves an understanding of the human world "by studying people's relations with nature, their geographical behaviour as well as their feelings and ideas in regard to space and place." Tuan suggests links between geography and the humanities are necessary. I have no trouble with this although I feel the links are wider than just with the humanities. Additionally, I hope we can pose general questions out of specific explorations, yet such may be difficult from the humanities perspective if we use the recently published collection on Humanistic Geography and Literature (Pocock, 1981) as the measure.

Nicholas Entrikin (1976) argued that the humanistic approach stresses meanings and values which derives impetus from phenomenology and therefore cannot contribute much to a scientific geography. I happen to question much that is claimed to be "scientific geography" and so I have little problem with the first aspect of his conclusion! I believe I have been operating as an unwitting humanistic geographer in some of my research on Botswana, New Zealand, and Canada. But in light of Entrikin's conclusion I am forced to address a potentially qualifying question: given that some of my work was based on library research more than one hundred years after the fact, was I or was I not operating as a humanistic geographer?

David Ley and Marwyn Samuels (1978, pp. 2-3) argued that humanistic geography puts "man [sic] back together again with all the pieces in place, including a heart and even a soul, with feelings as well as thoughts." Yet once more, I am not troubled with such a statement for in my explorations of people (as individuals and as groups) I have sought to become conversant with their sense of their totality by focussing on their values, attitudes, consciousness, and

perceptions. There is a danger if focus is given to these elements in isolation; they must be examined within their pertinent socio-economic, political and locational context. Without the latter any research is in difficulty of becoming idealist. Because of this realization I found myself agreeing some years ago with Ley and Samuels (1978, p. 9) when they wrote that humanistic geography can offer a means for the "reconciliation of social science and man [sic], to accommodate understanding and wisdom, objectivity and subjectivity, and materialism and idealism." Whether such reconciliation will necessarily lead also to a reconciliation of "human geography and social science", as they suggest, remains to be seen.

I am still left with the question of whether there is indeed a humanistic geography or simply humanistic geographers. Ted Relph (1981) has argued eloquently that in exploring the "positive" and "negative" implications of our modern built environment he was led to the formulation of what he calls "environmental humility". Although his writings and also those of Yi-Fu Tuan (e.g. 1971) are not explicitly political, I am intrigued for there is much in their work of direct political importance. Perhaps there is need to take their thoughts and consider their implications explicitly from a political perspective since part of the humanistic enterprise clearly involves political actors who play their roles in making and remaking places and environments.

From the writings of Ley, Relph, Tuan and many others I am led back to a critical question and, from it, to other questions. Are humanist geographers working within and searching out the formulations of a humanistic geography or are they not more delving into, and writing from the perspective of, their own humanistic make-up and world view? Is it right to see these two possibilities as being separate? If not, we must also ask, however, are they necessarily linked? To what extent does a researcher's humanistic conception intervene and affect the way he or she seeks to understand a group and its place? And what happens if a researcher does try to seek the understanding from within the group in question--does what is learned have an impact on the researcher's conceptions of humankind? Clearly all who call themselves humanistic geographers have the task of coming to understand themselves and their conceptions of humanism, their conceptions of world order, so that they can be fully aware of the filter - not a barrier - hopefully they have created for themselves and so become more sensitive to contrasting formulations.

How do these thoughts assist me as I ponder the question of whether or not there is a humanistic political geography? In truth, I am not altogether sure! We can observe that many of the themes developed in the past decade that have been labled humanistic geography have had their grounding within cultural geography. Indeed, David Ley (1981, 1983, 1985) identifies a strong linkage between cultural and humanistic geography. Ley suggests, however, that cultural geography has had no active view of humankind. Will a humanistic perspective provide the necessary view? But what view?

Who's view? These questions are not asked lightly for I see them as fundamental. But if cultural geography has and no active view of mankind, what of political geography? Regrettably, the same conclusion must be drawn. Might humanistic geography provide guidelines? Possibly, although two things are evident: (1) many political geographers remain uninterested in considering a humanistic perspective for their work; (2) if political geographers are open to considering the benefits of a humanistic approach, just whose work will serve as a guide, given that there seems still to be little cohesion to formulations as to just what humanistic geography entails.

It seems logical to suggest that political geographers in their work necessarily focus - whether they realize it or not - on politico-geographic phenomena which relate to some "ultimate purpose" for humankind. Can or, indeed, should we therefore consider that some political geographers may represent a "sub-group" of humanistic geographers? This still begs the question of what such a sub-group might examine.

A definition of humanistic political geography can be derived from a rewriting of Tuan's earlier noted comments about humanistic geography: humanistic political geography seeks a better understanding of human beings and their condition by studying the political dimensions of people's relations with nature, their politico-geographic behaviour, as well as the manner in which their feelings and ideas in regard to space and place have political underpinnings and consequences. It is not my intention to lay out the extensive literature that can be identified as relating to the themes within this definition; the Brunn and Yanarella article (forthcoming) will be of use to the reader in this respect. But a point of concern arises with respect to the latter paper - its identification of many themes plus the inclusion of numerous citations of a very wide ranging literature are useful, yet there is a danger of covering "everything" and ending up with no real focus, and therefore, "nothing". The imposed realization of applicability of many publications to a proposed humanistic political geography still leaves me wondering, wondering along the lines outlined here about the existence of a humanistic political geography.

So I come to the end of this particular exploration. There may indeed be a humanistic political geography with its basis being the incorporation of humanistic concerns, linked to a more general humanistic geography. Issues of power and control are central to political geography but they have not yet been explored adequately from the perspective of a humanistic geography. To what extent are these concepts important or significant? Perhaps only a direct application of these concepts within an explicitly humanistic political geography will provide the answer.

DOCUMENTARY NOTE: Publications that could be cited with reference to personal points made within this paper are too numerous to be included. An interested reader might turn to: "Racism and Reaction: The

Development of a Batswana 'raison d'être' for the Country," in Cultural Discord in the Modern World, L.J. Evenden and F.F. Cunningham, editors (Vancouver: Tantalus, 1974), pp. 111-126; A Capital for Canada: Conflict and Compromise in the Nineteenth Century (Chicago: University of Chicago, Department of Geography, Research Paper No. 182, 1977); "Identity and Territory: Geographical Perspectives on Nationalism and Regionalism," Annals of the Association of American Geographers, Vol. 72, no. 2 (1982), pp. 514-531; "Perceptions of Landscapes in Heaven," Journal of Cultural Geography, Vol. 6, no. 1 (1985), pp. 127-139; "Self-Determination for Indigenous People: The Context for Change," in Regionalism, Nationalism and Self-Determination: Geographical Essays. Eleanor Kofman, David B. Knight and R.J. Johnston, editors (London: Croom Helm, in press).

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A THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON HUMANIST GEOGRAPHY

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In view of the limited space at my disposal, I wish to short-circuit some of the preamble which my title probably requires. I am addressing specifically Christian theology, and I am taking it as given that there is a place for productive engagement between those whose humanism is grounded in a theological perspective and those who give it an alternative foundation. My paper in the recent Carleton volume, Our Geographic Mosaic (Wallace, 1985) provides some of the necessary background to this presentation.

I wish to argue that a theological perspective on humanist geography calls for the distinctive integration of three ontological dimensions of human existence. It requires of those who work within it that they take seriously the materialism of life, the centrality of human relationships, and the need for human beings to recognise that they are accountable. These are not discrete categories, for our approach to the natural world and to other people is fundamentally coloured by our acceptance or otherwise of an ontological (not just an existential) responsibility for how we interact with them. I will briefly expand on the interdependence of these dimensions in what follows. The hallmark of a Christian worldview is that it must attempt, despite the obvious difficulties, to hold these dimensions together; and the challenge to the Christian community is to give some substance to that integration. Obviously, there exists common ground between this theological perspective and the focus of other humanist geographies: historical materialism and the feminist critique of mechanistic modes of thought are but two of the current epistemological axes which it intersects.

A material humanity

Despite its temptations both in thought and practice towards idealism, a theological perspective is fundamentally material. The essence of Christianity is a tale of the creation of "the heavens and

the earth", of the incarnation of a God who is willing to encounter us "in the flesh", and of a redemption embracing "the resurrection of the body". Attention to the material condition of men and women and of the natural environment on which they are dependent is therefore an essential component of any geography satisfying a theological understanding of humanness. This implies that humanist geographers, while committed to a wider range of inquiry than is traditionally encompassed within "economic geography", certainly cannot ignore the traditional core questions of that subdiscipline, as they relate to the dynamics of resource exploitation, industrial production and all the non-production activities which are required to maintain the material culture of society. We need to recognise, however, that there are significant conceptual and methodological problems facing humanist geographers in this area.

It is increasingly clear that the capitalist economy of the contemporary world is globally integrated yet out of control (Drucker, 1986). There is hardly any place, however remote, where economic activity and the welfare of human populations is not influenced by developments and systemic forces impinging from afar. At the same time, economic decision-making is so diffused and capital is so mobile that no single institution, political or economic, can significantly determine the course of events. Whatever our chosen framework for the analysis of economic activity, therefore, it becomes increasingly difficult to sustain a theory of human agency while giving explanatory priority to macro-scale systemic actors (such as transnational corporations) and tendencies (the internationalisation of production and finance). As a result, I think it is still necessary to agree with Gregory (1981) that humanist geographers have shied away from analysis of the modern economy. This conclusion is not intended to belittle the very valuable work of those such as Scott and Massey who are working in a broadly Marxian tradition and who have as much claim to be humanist geographers as any of us here. Rather, I wish to suggest that historical materialism is a problematic framework for humanist investigation of material life.

We need to remember that Marx regarded capitalism as materially progressive although fatally flawed socially. In this sense, at least, he was as much a believer in the marriage of capitalism and "progress" as his liberal contemporaries. Neither he nor his intellectual descendants, including the human geographers claiming this hertage, have adequately demonstrated that the <u>culture</u> of materialistic growth which characterises modern capitalism is an expression of <u>false</u> consciousness: they have, in other words, not given grounds for accepting a mode-of-production-specific explanation of these cultural values in place of the ontological (and therefore more general) interpretation which Christian theology offers. Moreover, if these values are something which will 'necessarily' wither only under a form of socialism which has definitively banished scarcity, the implications of this critical prerequisite for the natural environment remain indefencibly unexplored by geographers in this tradition. Works such

as Leiss (1972; 1976), which at least face up to such questions, simultaneously indicate just how far they are from being resolved, even at a theoretical level.

What I suggest humanist geography needs to develop is a critique, not just of capitalism or of the technology which makes a truly global economy possible (although we are aware of the military stimulus behind much of it), but of the human self-understanding which submits to economistic and technological "imperatives". The (effectively) unchallenged consensus in favour of the endless pursuit of economic growth and of doing what is technically possible, whatever its implications for human welfare (whether directly or in terms of the opportunity costs) and the future of the natural environment, suggests that the theological concept of stewardship could be fruitfully reevaluated. I will explore this idea more fully in the closing section of the paper. At this stage, let us simply note that it raises questions about the values expressed in people's interaction with others and with the material world and it may therefore help us to explore more perceptively the psychology of "progress".

Relational humanity.

Christian theology understands personhood in terms of humanity "made in the image of God". But what does this imply? A traditional interpretaton has centred on the divine mandate to human beings to exercise lordship over the rest of creation. Secularised, and therefore stripped of any real context of accountability, this view has been identified as an ingredient of the ideology of progress which has legitimated the environmental despoilation of capitalist industrialisation (White, 1967), or, more bluntly, the rape of the earth. The metaphor is, of course, significant. Feminist exploration of the history of attitudes to the environment has demonstrated the long-standing association of "Nature" and organic relationships with the female and the mastery of the environment through technology (machines and the mechanistic models of economics) with the male (Merchant, 1980). The psychology of "progress", in other words, appears to involve the perpetuation of concepts of disharmonious gender relations reflected in the attitudes of a male-dominated society to the environment.

Certainly, the idea of a stewardly sovereignty over the environment is part of theology's understanding of personhood (and this radically distinguishes it from essentially pantheistic responses to modern society's environmental destructiveness). However, a recent revival of interest in what we may term 'theological anthropology' has produced a much more penetrating reflection on what "the image of God" implies for the ontology of human beings. Moltmann (1985), in particular, argues cogently that a theological account of their distinctiveness needs to be grounded less in their relationship to nature than in their relationship to God: God who, moreover, is understood in the relational dimensions of the traditional trinitarian

doctrine (embracing Father, Son and Holy Spirit). The "image of God" is seen in the "whole existence" of the person, not in one particular dimension of it; and it is only truly expressed in the relationships of a shared and sexually-differentiated human community, not in an individualism (especially a 'rugged', male one which masters others and the material world in the name of progress).

Accountable humanity.

The theological concept of stewardship provides the basis for a number of related ideas. It does, of course, give expression to the claim that men and women are not autonomous but are accountable to God and for each other. At the same time, it affirms that there is more to nature than its capacity to satisfy the material wants of human society: it is a creation which the Creator delights in its own right. Viewed in this light, the thoroughgoing instrumentality of current and prospective technologies of environmental manipulation, especially, perhaps, with respect to animate nature, suggests that contemporary society has a very low view of the material world's ontological status, which deserves to be more rigorously questioned.

The corollary of stewardship on which I wish to focus in conclusion, however, is a consciousness of limits. The illegitimacy of a purely instrumental approach to the environment is itself a basis for moderating society's claims upon it. But there is another dimension which takes us closer to the psychology of material progress. The theology of stewardship involves a recognition that men and women's lordship over creation is intended primarily as a mode of expressing their relationship to God. The effectiveness of their harnessing of the material world (their 'output', if you like) is not unimportant, but it is intended to be derivative of their maintaining the quality of that relationship. The inversion of this priority, preoccupation with the product rather than with sustaining relationships anchored in love (plural because the test of authentic love of God is love of one's neighbour), is termed idolatry. This is a religious disposition which indicates that a people's security and identity has become grounded in possession of what they have gained rather than in trust in their (and the material world's) Creator, whose love they reject as too threatening.

Idolatry is the category Goodzwaard (1984) uses to account for the immoderation (the lack of regard for appropriate limits) evident in the religious quest for unattainable absolutes which constitutes a massive and distorting drain on the modern world's material and human resources. The Strategic Defence Initiative, which will guarantee security from nuclear attack, the all-encompassing welfare state which will guarantee our material security under all circumstances (and which is already in retreat), the ever-higher technology medical system that will guarantee a prolonged life: these are the sorts of ultimately unsustainable demands that contemporary industrial societies are placing on their economy (and on their professionals who are

responsible for 'delivering the goods'). Meanwhile, attainable expressions of love in practice are at a premium: basic material and social needs, such as decent housing and a valued task (a broader concept than "employment") are denied an increasing percentage of their populations.

The challenge of shaping an economy that gives primacy to sustaining human relationships and reproduction without ignoring that society has material needs which need to be met as effectively as human ingenuity can devise is as vital as it is daunting. It is a project which deserves greater attention from humanist geographers. Christian theology provides a distinctive, and I suggest fruitful, orientation for the task.

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GEOGRAPHICAL SEMIOTICS: A BRIDGE BETWEEN HUMANISM AND SCIENCE

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Imagine travelling along a relatively familiar route toward reaching a friend's house. As you drive the car, your attention shifts from ahead to the right and to the left, and some times behind through the rear vision mirror. There are the familiar route signs: the route number, speed limit 50 km, and markers to indicate upcoming intersections. An increasing number of establishments vaguely enter into your consciousness, and a somewhat sharper sense of attention is centered on finding an earlier used landmark as a sign to mark your impending turn off. Your gaze scans the landscape, but you cast aside that which does not fit a remembered set of things. Finally, ahead there comes into view objects that suddenly enrich the memory and trigger a heightened level of anticipation. There is the shop on the corner! Its paint seems more worn than you remembered, but its sign says "Variety Store". The intersection is just beyond, and other evidence such as familiar fencing, adjacent structures, and perhaps the forgotten shape of a nearby tree provide other cues that reinforce and thicken the expected state of affairs. You proceed with an anticipation of reaching your destination. Sufficent information has been received to prompt continuation toward reaching the intended objective. A set of things have been caught by your attention and used as signitive evidence of the correct route to accomplish the intended objective. I have just described a geographical semiotic experience in the achievement of a set of particular objectives. A series of objects and object spatial associations have been described according to a particular meaning structure related to finding the correct route.

But imagine further the same environment being approached by persons with other intentions: a postal delivery person, someone in search for a house to buy, or a primary school child returning home from school on foot. For each of these individuals, or class of persons, the same environment is construed quite differently, following earlier learned mental models appropriate to their respective roles and objectives. The post person would likely direct attention to search

for the house numbers corresponding to the pre-sorted mail in hand, simultaneously watching the pavement to avoid stumbling on broken concrete and being attentive to the remembered encounter with a barking dog. The house buyer may quickly scan visible house fronts for customary signs of property for sale while the ambiance of the street is consciously considered. The school child enjoys the sidewalk cracks as a happy challenge to avoid stepping on them while glancing about to discover where friends are playing.

These statements, though cast in hypothetical terms, are ones that elicit some kind of mental state in each listener's mind. The sounds you have heard are recognizable words that fit together to form thoughts. Though the exact images represented by the words embedded in the sentences may not have been experienced precisely in the same way, everyone can follow the scenerios with a sense of familiarity. In one way or another each person has formed some kind of mental model from these words. Your model is a mental representation based on earlier personal/social experience activated by the utterances just heard. While there may be significant differences in the actual constructs we individually experienced, there are profound commonalities which are shared by all of us, if communication has taken place at all. None of the evidence I have just described is within our immediate attention, but it belongs to sets of experience earlier acquired and available to be used, even hypothetically.

There is more to this than just hypothetical constructs. There are elements that fit geographies we have personally experienced, or know others to have experienced. Mental activity structures experience. Experience reinforces, alters, and adds to our stock of mental models. There is behavioural feedback control that affects our sensory intake and organizes the stimuli in ways appropriate to our intentions. (Powers, 1979, Bjorklund, 1983, Johnson-Laird, 1983).

Investigation of mental activity by Philip Johnson-Laird (1983) led to the formulation of a functionally-based theory of mental models. This theory posits that our cognitive capacities are energy systems which computationally organize sensory stimuli to form mental models capable of simultaneously directing conscious and unconscious levels of behaviour. This process, partially simulatable on computers, provides us with the experience and knowledge we use in our private lives and in our interactions socially and environmentally. As there is neither time nor space to discuss the intricacies of the model building process, I will simply assert for present purposes that, from the perspective of this geographer, mental models are taken to be the basis on which individuals experience and partially share the environment objectively and intersubjectively. Mental models are structures formed from neural processing of sensory stimuli in digital-like ways to make mental models of human experience. As Johnson-Laird puts it,

> You may say that you perceive the world directly, but in fact what you experience depends on a model of the world. Entities in the world give rise to the pattern of energy

> that reach the sense organs. The information latent in these patterns is used by the nervous system to construct a (partial) model of the entities that gave rise to the energy in the first place....In short, our view of the world is causally dependent both on the way the world is and on the way we are. There is an obvious but important corollary: all our knowledge of the world depends on our ability to construct models of it. (ibid., p. 402)

Johnson-Laird goes on to demonstrate that while the primary source of mental models is perception, it can take other forms and serve other purposes. Models are used in interpreting language and in making inferences as natural extensions of the perceptual function. He says, "...if the perception of the world is model-based and the ability to make inferences model-based, then discourse about the world must be model-based, and the ability to make inferences from what we perceive or from what we are told enables us to anticipate even quite remote events." (ibid., p. 407)

These statements provide a necessary platform on which to build a bridge to unite positivistic and phenomenological approaches in geography. The mental model cognitive theory, in effect, affirms positions adopted by many others earlier that the world is experienced (and verified) from perspectives. The mental models we develop form templates to deal with the visual, auditory, olfactory, kinesthetic, and tactile information we acquire.

As practicing geographers, we have developed a complex and sometimes an apparently contradictory set of such models. These may be described as models pertaining to our personal lives in social-cultural contexts, and those acquired from our professional training. Some of us have acquired a predisposition for models anchored to such constructs as uniqueness, subjective valuation, passive participation, and uncontrollable causality. Others of us are predisposed by our earlier mental model building to search for generalizations, central tendencies, objectifications, and probable causalties. The models we start with have profound affects on the ways we deal with experience personally and professionally. However models may differ, they are, nonetheless, common elements to any perspective. In addition, the models we develop are outcomes of learning to read signitive evidence drawn from our surroundings.

No one can deny that all experience has objective and subjective dimensions. Out of the objects and object relations we learn to construe, we develop subjective stances, a kind of intersubjectivity, and sometime additional objectifications about objects/events and their relations. Intersubjectivity develops as experience is communicated to one another to form bridges between our personal cognitive states and those of others.

Verbal language itself is an intersubjective signitive tool we apply to link our own experience to others. Landscapes, built

environments, and social environments constitute other objective/intersubjective models of communication based on our behavioural use of evidence selected for our purposes. For example, the emergence of the front of the Rocky Mountains when travelling across the plain may signify our approach to the area where we expect to spend some leisure time enjoying the aspects of the mountain habitats we have selected. Or the same phenomena may be interpreted quite differently by the geomorphologist who regards it as containing features to be interpreted as clues or evidence of earlier landscape configurations. Social behaviour produces other sets of observable evidence that is used signitively to convey information to others about the social environment. Codes of meaning are learned to distinguish between public and private domains, sacred and profane, areas of accute social stress from areas of social attraction within our own cultural sphere. The elite develop forms to express their social identity, their spatial and temporal claims. Even though the poor are not participants in the socialscapes created by the affluent, they do not fail to read messages produced by them.

The examples provided above follow different mental models, but in each case there are others with similar interests who learn to share and to follow similar signitive evidence and interpretation of it. The necessity to share our individual experience with others initiates communication. Once the signitive elements of landscapes and socialscapes are learned, they are used communicatively to signify certain states, processes, or relations for others to use. In geography we have created rich "languages" from our intersubjectively shared and objectified schemata. We apply semiotic structures descriptively, analytically, and practically on a daily basis. In effect, semiotic structures are used as markers of environmental meaning and also communicatively to share experience.

In this discussion I shall focus on the mentally modeled aspects of environments (natural, built and social) and the behaviours that occur within them as communicative systems. These are made, used, and operated by members who directly or indirectly participate in them. This we call **geographical semiotics.** Learning and using the appropriate geographical signs enable people to operate effectively in environments. Barthes (1964, 106) suggests that there is a law of 'universal semantization of usage'. Objects are converted to become 'function signs', and take on use value, exchange value and sign value. Certainly these value functions fit geographical things, and their spatial relations.

The term geographical semiotics may not be one in common geographical parlance, but it is useful to encompass the broad and complex set of signitive systems we have learned to develop and use in dealing with our surroundings. Semiotics, earliest developed in linguistics (Morris (1938, 1953, 1971), Saussure (1966), Peirce (1958), Barthes (1964), etc.) has subsequently been applied to built environments by Eco (1976, 1980), Preziosi (1979), Gottdiener (1983), Krampen (1979), Krupat (1985), etc. An extension has also been made to

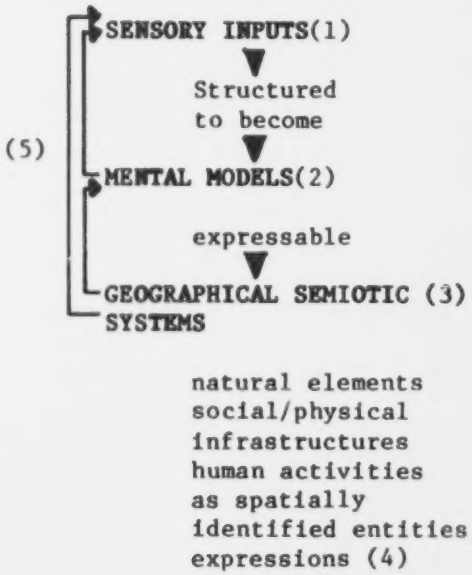
the study of human behaviour by focus on the communicative function that body language, food, furniture, and events themselves play in transmitting information (Goffmann, 1959, 1963; Broadbent, 1980; Appleyard, 1976; 1981; Foote, 1983). A still further application of semiotics is to culture itself (Pelc, 1981, Pawlowski, 1980, etc.)

From a study of these and other works, I am led to suggest that a corner stone of geographic work is interpretation/explanation of detectable signitive evidence of mental models. Our lives are governed by our abilities to "read" place identities and their spatial relations. We seek to discover the patterns, developmental sequences, and causalities behind the evidence toward understanding our domain and our relations to it.

Focus again on the hypothetical landscape mentioned in the beginning. The set of mental models elicited from the description, despite the differences among our individual models, can be mapped homomorphically. Attempts at this have now become part of standard geographical work, folowing the work of Gould (1974), Lynch (1976) and many others. These treatments represent the initial efforts to document some geographical semiotic structures. Much more needs to be done. We need to discover the geographical semiotic structures that mark the world of the poor, the homeless, the teenagers, the workers, the affluent, the elderly, etc. What are the geographical structures that form the socialscapes of opportunity, or inversely the socialscapes of deprivation?

At the risk of alienating those who are not model-minded, I find it useful to offer a simple diagram (Figure 1) to express key relationships between ourselves, the environment, and other people.

Figure 1



Sensory inputs (1) are a function of existing mental modes (2) and the natural, built, and social environment containing n semiotic systems (3) spatially and temporally arranged and related according to intent, role, or activity of persons (4) with behavioural feed backs effecting sensory inputs and mental models (5).

However each of us construes our private or intimately shared worlds, these are not sufficient for our own survival. Isolation is not a condition that supports survival of the individual. We are not only dependent upon others, but crave participation and belonging. Toward achieving this, we communicate by body language, verbal expression and other artistic modes, and by creating physical and social infrastructures. These form the existing complex systems of geographical semiotics. They are used as signs sometimes of intent or possibility. These signs or indicators become the visible (also auditory, kinesthetic, tactile) stimuli used by persons whose orientations, consciously or unconsciously, are directed toward some intent or goal.

This view posits that there is a dual set of geographical semiotic languages that both differentiate experience and unite it. Two basic types of geographical semiotics are recognized:

1. Common geographical signs/indicators: consists of that which is understood objectively and intersubjectively, used on a daily routine basis by the members/participants of any society. This includes verbal exchanges, linguistic evidence, advertisements, color displays, traffic signals, street signs, body language, architectural codes, social and physical infrastructures, etc.

2. Specialist-technical signs/indicators: attention to an understanding of the meaning of objects/events/activities related to specific occupations or services. For example, electric lines as read by technicians; urban planners' conceptualize and model CBD's, suburbs, market areas; residents' ways of geographically signifying neighborhoods, ghettos, niches, districts, etc.

These languages are formed from higher level abstractions using evidence that was initially formed from ordinary experience. Both kinds of semiotics have been developed from substantive evidence interpreted from human purpose. There are innumerable geographical semiotics systems which operate in any culture. No one masters all of these languages. We struggle enough with keeping up with the languages necessary for our survival and participation in society according to our age, sex, occupation, level of education, ideological persuasion, mood, and intent. We concentrate on the set of specialist semiotics that fit our objectives/intentions, the particular roles we assume, and the people we wish to communicate with.

One of the most enduring concerns in geography as a specific discipline is the concern with the relationships between human beings and their environment. Various sets of concepts have developed to focus on particular aspects of the environment: properties of the natural landscape, the built environment, and human behavioural patterns, to mention a few. Yet these conceptual frameworks are not sustained by any comprehensive or unifying theory to unite them. Two

powerful schools of thought have emerged, referred to broadly as paradigms: the humanistic one and the scientific one. Each of these perspectives is based on different sets of underlying assumptions. Each has carved out distinctive concepts, operating procedures, and objectives. The difference and the characteristics of these two perspectives have been explored in a number of works: Ley and Samuels (1978), and Couclelis and Golledge (1983), for example. At this stage there is a tendency to think of humanist and scientific perspectives as diametrical opposites, as adversarial, and non-reconcilable. It has not been the objective of this paper to review or discuss the ideas, conflicts and ongoing dialogues related to this interface. It is, however, the objective to suggest that there are bridges to be built between them toward a unified theory of geography. Geographic semiotics represents a bridge between humanism and science approaches.

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HUMANISM, GEOGRAPHY AND LANGUAGE

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Humanism has made an important contribution to human geography over the past decade in emphasizing the need for philosophical understanding of human conditions. It has done so not as a philosophy in itself, for humanism cannot be presented as a philosophy and to attempt to do so would be to promote philosophical confusion. Rather, it is within the spirit of humanistic enterprise, a concern with a definition of human needs, values, and experiences, that we have been able to refine the categories according to which human being is understood.

More recently, in the enterprises of both humanism in general and some aspects of historical materialism, we can see emerging an ability to analyse the specifically material content of the world in a way that it is not idealized. The deliberately epistemic approach of early humanism has been replaced with an approach that is explictly contextual and which, although it still begins with individual existence, emphasizes the concrete nature of existence in the world, and extends that relationship to incorporate the social whole. I would like to make a claim that continuing humanism must be both post-idealist and post-structuralist. It is the combination of post-idealist and post-structuralist thinking that gives optimism for theoretical extension of humanism in geography.

Philosophically, humanist geography has in common with the other social sciences several current issues. One is the attempt to transcend the structure/human agency debate toward a dialectical understanding of humans and the world as process. To do so requires the explicit recognition that, yes, history is process; geography is process; and in fact society is process. A second important project is the attempt to create a linkage between the singular and the universal, (the individual and society), in order to produce understanding that is

both incorporative and critical, and that is able to assemble these levels, or scales in order, empirically, to focus at any point upon that trajectory from the singular to the universal without sacrificing logical consistency in the process.

Philosophical progress in these two areas lies in our ability to view the world dialectically, and in the ability to develop concepts where human praxis can be very clearly identified as the synthesizing agent. Specific to the philosophy of geography, humanistic approaches have allowed a transition similar to that which occurred in physics much earlier, in the transition from Newtonian to relational definitions of space. If, however, physics contributes to a necessary definition of space for the geographer, this definition is certainly not adequate. In the transition in humanistic geography, space has become the spatial. It has no ontological status, but rather becomes a quality, according to which we understand the nature of place.

Looking at the current agenda for humanistic geography, the greatest challenge lies in pushing forward this project in order to achieve a better fit between a concept of the world that is simply dialectical (for decades ago we managed to achieve a dialectical concept of the world) and one which addresses what I would call the dilemma of modernity, in which ideology and technics combine to create spatial relations at a scale that is increasingly global, and to define places in a way that is increasing globally connected.

It is central to the continued development of a philosophically sound basis for humanistic geography to continually criticize and reexamine its central concepts. One of the areas that needs to be explored very carefully and thoroughly is the area of the philosophy of language. I may go so far as to suggest that a philosophy of language is more important to geography than is a philosophy of space. This paper is a tentative presentation and brief elaboration of two reasons for this claim.

The first is that human action, that is the conscious appropriation of the world, is fundamentally language. The two are synonomous, and cannot be separated. Action is the establishment of the human/environment relationship univocally. That is, action is initiated by human beings. However much it may be structured, and however much it may occur in a historical context (and I would argue strongly for both of those) it is nonetheless established continually, progressively by individual human beings who must make a choice to do so on an ongoing basis. This claim, which has its roots in existential philosophy, can be carried forward to a philosophy of material existence. Action is dispersed and structured, within an assemblage of objects that extends outward to achieve global scale. It is that assemblage of objects that we are concerned with more than anything else, but we need to take account of this univocal status of action at the beginning.

Action is defined by a number of qualities that also define human consciousness of the environment, or the becoming of human beings,

which is also the material of history. These necessary qualities exist in a unity which we might describe as adelphous, that is, arising simultaneously at each moment of historical action. They include, for example: labour as the production of both the material self and the world that consists of objects and systems in which we univocally and universally establish relationships; emotion as the capacity for happiness or, as Heidegger puts it, caring, which is synonymous with the project of being; spatiality as material extension by which distance is overcome and place is established; sharing, which is another way of saying that all action is social, or that history could be defined as the sharing of the world. Another necessary quality is language, which is the potential for all action to be understood or to be made rational to others, as it necessarily constitutes a form of social relation, and as all action is an expression of social relations. The most insignificant, minute action is potentially language. It may not necessarily become formal language, but it is still potentially so, because it is a material constitution of the world, and can be understood. Therein lies the basis for the rationality of history.

Landscape, as a very important object of analysis of geographers, needs also to be incorporated within this ontological system. It is the form of language by which the ensemble of objects that constitutes the world is organized and given meaning. In other words, landscape becomes the material quality according to which place is constituted. Seen in this way, all human action is a constant process of landscape formation. The constitution of being, consciousness, is in fact the formation of landscape, the creation of a landscape.

Of course this is usually a very fleeting thing. As such, although the recognition of landscape as process establishes a necessary philosophical point, it does not take us very far in understanding the world. This is because the durability of any particular landscape varies tremendously. As geographers we do not dwell upon the initial, fleeting optical and cognitive organization of the environment that occurs continuously, although that is an important basis of our thinking. We are more concerned with intentionally created landscapes, that have greater durability and that become one of the most powerful means of structuring human activity. Landscape creation is an expression of efficacy, of ideology and of social exigency. In some cases this occurs over periods of centuries, in settings where material transformation occurs and can be interpreted or read, and where significance can be seen in the ways in which its meanings shift historically.

A second reason for focussing on language is concerned not with the specific content of geography, but with a more general problem of how disciplines are given philosophical direction. Language is ideology-laden, and all forms of language, including landscape, have specific ideology-laden histories. By understanding the way in which landscape, as an example, is used as a form of language to ideological ends, (and it is used constantly to such ends), geographers are in a

position to reveal and perhaps even change, the structures according to which that language is organized. These are the social rules (syntax) by which language occurs, and in which places become the setting in which human agency is either fully in control of its potential, or thwarted by messages that can create either havoc or oppression. This is to say that landscapes have particular qualities, that they have very specific implications for the ways in which human beings live their lives. That in itself is a modest, even simplistic claim, but it is also the essence of what we try to grapple with when we look at landscape as the language according to which human history develops. This is increasingly the case as all forms of objective language, from the formal written word to architecture, become both globalized and extended. The modern landscape becomes globalized, structured by ideology that is ever more readily communicated, and made more enduring by technics that are ever more effective in modifying the face of the earth.

The modern form of landscape presents a challenge to the human geographer that is both philosophical and normative. Philosophically, it has been argued (although not in depth) that it is necessary to recognize landscape as language, as part of the continuing humanistic endeavour of situating human beings in concrete and fully examined contexts. Normatively, it is necessary to recognize the power of language to change and direct the ways in which it will subsequently be used. This is important both to avoid the linguistic traps wherein we use ossified linguistic categories to cast ourselves backwards conceptually (a good example is the tendency to express humanistic geography in the language of phenomenology); and in order to develop a fuller appreciation of the ways in which language changes as an expression of the modern world. For example, we might look at what has been referred to as neo-conservativism and see that it rests very strongly in particular forms of language that have been developed recently. In fact even some of the most outspoken advocates for overcoming dominating, oppressive forms of language (for example Habermas) can be turned back against themselves in the support of neo-conservativist ideals.

There is a wide literature that warns against such transformations becoming the fate of humanism, and this sentiment is expresed elsewhere in this collection by Edward Relph. As a preventative, we might begin with closer examination of both the philosophical basis for the incorporation of a concept of language as a dynamic part of geographical enquiry, and with continued examination of the empirical conditions in which language as landscape is expressed.

HUMANISM IN SCIENCE/SCIENCE IN HUMANISM: TOWARDS INTEGRATION IN THE PRACTICE OF SOCIAL GEOGRAPHY

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Despite considerable philosophical rumination in geography over the last decade, science and humanism have tended to remain distinct orientations to research. The criticisms from adherents in either camp have served to identify and amplify the problems inherent in each approach - that humanism has been without method and science without soul. In this paper I wish to consider science and humanism as they relate to social geography, and in particular as they relate to the work I am doing in the geography of mental health. By partaking in the debate, I wish to advocate a partial dismantling of the science/humanism dualism. I maintain that there is a position for both science and humanism in social geography and suggest that in the realm of method more so than in philosophy the two can fruitfully be welded in research.

In claiming a position for both science and humanism rather than either one or the other, I want to suggest that it is the issues we address as geographers that will ideally shape the contours of our method. By this I do not wish to imply a return to naive idealism. Rather I wish to echo Porteous (1986, 43) in advocating a reclaimed personal art in geography. By discussing the place of what I have coined "compassionate method" in my research, I seek to demonstrate that creativity in the method employed may bear fruits in a more humane geography.

The paper will be arranged as follows. First science and humanism will be defined and surveyed for their influence in contemporary geography. Second, the case example of the social geography of the mentally disabled will be introduced. A third section will outline the basis of compassionate method and ways this approach has influenced my work. A fourth and final section will offer reflections on integration of science and a "restructured" humanism, in social geography.

Science and Humanism: A Personal View

Science and humanism are "omnibus" terms, each carrying an often-confusing baggage of interpretations and suppositions. Science, as it has derived from positivist philosophy, involves the methodologically rigorous testing of hypotheses in search of law-like statements. The ultimate aim has been theory-building. A humanist approach, by contrast, has tended to develop appreciation of human-environment relations rather than explanation of the causes of these relations. This humanist quest has been pursued with fewer qualms about the inevitable subjectivity of the endeavour.

Over the last decade, humanistic approaches have been an adjunct to the "business" of geography as a scientific enterprise, pursued by a small cadre of committed individuals (e.g. Relph, 1977; Buttimer, 1974; Tuan, 1976). The basis for a humanistic geography was a fundamental dissatisfaction with positivism as it had been translated into research. Orthodox scientific method held a fact-value distinction which implied that detached observers were called upon to gather objective facts and build theories by means of hypothesis testing.

The subject-object distinction has been another dualism of positive science objectionable to humanists. Much spatial analysis continues to consider places and locations as objects in themselves. While valid for the purposes of intellectual exercise, this perspective on place bears little resemblance to a reality in which places are locations inbued with meaning for subjects. The place of humanism within a self-consciously scientific geography has therefore been at best precarious.

The behavioural mode of explanation did much to breathe new life into positivist research. But its focus on the cognition-behaviour link was essentially (and still is) a mere granting of decision making power to those under study. What behaviouralism cannot explain is experience. Certainly elements of experience have been appropriated by techniques such as semantic differential. But the vastness and indivisibility of the experience of place and environment represents too "fuzzy" a topic area for positive science.

Tuan's (1976) agenda for humanistic endeavour considered (implicity) seeing, interpreting and translating as the fundamental activities of the practitioner. The subject-matter was to be existential space - a non-geometric space of concern and involvement. Implied by Tuan and fellow humanists (e.g. Relph, 1976; Buttimer, 1976) was a shift from focus on "the decision-making person" to "the dwelling person". Implied in this was the total location of acting, thinking and feeling people in particular landscapes.

Structural and marxist critiques in geography have served to expose the naivete of a human geography detached from historical and material context. As theoretical debate in geography has entered the common ground of structure and agency, the lines between marxist and

humanist-inspired work have blurred (e.g. Cybriwsky, Ley and Western, 1986). Differences are tending to be more pronounced in parent philosophies than at the level of empirical studies.

Recent years have therefore seen an infusion of structural perspective into humanist endeavour. The result has been that humanist concerns such as sense of place (e.g., Relph, 1970) have been updated and set within the more realistic context of constrained opportunities. The work of Western (1981) on the situation of "coloureds" in Capetown serves as an example. Pred's (1983) delineation of place as historically contingent process has been an important theoretical contribution towards this end. Acknowledgement that "feeling" about a place can be "structured" goes some distance towards legitimising a humanist perspective on issues of oppression and inequality.

The shift that has occurred in the human dimension of geography has therefore been granted impetus by the ethics of social justice accompanying the radical critique. The evolution is a realistic one - from "the decision making person" of early humanism to "the struggling person" of the "restructured humanism" of the mid-eighties.

Humanisn in Science: A Case Example

My research is centered on an effort to understand the experience and difficulties of daily life faced by community-based ex-psychiatric patients. In psychiatry, a change of focus from hospital to community settings has, over the last twenty years, significantly altered the character of mental patients' lives. The process known as deinstitutionalisation has involved a shift in the locus of care for dependent and deviant populations. Substantial numbers of people formerly confined to mental hospitals are faced with the challenges of coping in the community. Conventionally, coping among mentally ill populations has been measured by such crude indices as rates of rehospitalisation. My research involves an exploratory assessment of relationships between a variety of coping indices and measures of the client-community experience.

The work is scientific in its search for key determinants of coping among the sample group. The assumption is that these tendencies will be observable among similarly diagnosed groups and urban settings. The work is also humanist for its interest in the details of everyday life among respondents and for the style of research I have conducted with the group. The anticipated outcome is a study in which scientific and humanistic elements have a symbiotic and mutually enhancing relationship. While this approach might not suit all topical domains of social geography, the present case is exposing a vitally human geography of the psychiatrically disadvantaged. It has been the particular challenges posed by the problem itself that have led to a blend of scientific and humanistic influence in the work.

To question the meaning of an environment or behaviour implies that it is first identified by the researcher, then described. This

suggests, in my opinion, three stages in a humanistic social geography. These are first, identifying a situation and admitting the values underlying the choice; second, describing it; and third, ascribing meaning to it both from the perspective of participants and from ones own perspective as theoretically-informed observer.

A social geography that is contemporaneously scientific in character can continue from this point with the less inclusive and more rigourous tasks prescribed by scientific method. A humanistic social geography can therefore constitute an end in itself (i.e., a descriptive study of interaction in a particular locale), or it can be a means to an end (i.e., the compilation of informed knowledge from which meaningful hypotheses can be constructed).

A socio-ecological model of health (White, 1981) underlies the work and is essentially qualitative in orientation. It suggests that there are environmental (in its broadest sense) determinants of health operating within a systems framework and that the quality of an environment markedly affects the health and welfare of a population. The model stresses the relations between person and mileu, implying that a person's actions may influence the constellation of factors that make up the environment.

To this extent, an ecological perspective has epistemological roots in the interactive position proposed by psychologists (e.g. Lewin, 1964; Ittleson, 1960) and discussed by geographers describing the field of environmental perception. The interactive perspective states that objects are the result of constructions by a subject. This has implications for my work as a social geographer. In order to understand the persons of interest and give them full dignity of their "subjecthood", I must attempt to understand the way they construct the "object". In terms of an ecological perspective on health, this involves not a singular object, but the set of complex interrelationships that constitute the environment, of which the person is an active part.

While I am implying that to a degree people shape the meaning in their own surroundings, I am not down-playing the existence of an external physical environment and real forces influencing its contours. Identifiable social relations are very much at the root of spatial form, and likewise, spatial form can mould social relations (Gregory and Urry, 1985). The residential clustering of the psychiatrically disadvantaged in inner city locations is a prime example of this. Social and spatial structures are powerful yet "distal" determinants of perceptions and experience. I feel it is important to accept that there are a more immediate or "proximal" set of meanings attributed to the environment, arising from personal experience and the details of everyday life. Smith (1984) suggests that these "folk" or "lay" perceptions and behaviours are accessible to the geographer through participant observation. I have infused elements of this tradition into my work with the mentally ill and named the approach "compassionate method".

Compassionate Method: A Practical Bridge

To my view, materialist and scientific analyses are neither able nor have they claimed to adequately investigate geographic questions of experience and behaviour. We may be living in a material world and may be in need of statistically supportable analyses, but those we are living with in our cities and society are people of spirit and imagination. How should we encounter, document and attempt to explain their world(s)? This question becomes all the more pressing when we are motivated by an ethic of social justice.

The sheer identification of "the disadvantaged" in any context implies power. The insidious power over is closely aligned to the potentially more liberating power to. Our method, and use of the authority that is inherent in knowledge and position, is intimately related to our power to bring justice to a situation. For, paradoxically, although justice is something that needs to be won and struggled for, it is, in fact, never fully achieved. As Fox (1979, p. 78) remarks, justice ultimately operates as a verb rather than a noun in our lives.

I have therefore searched for ways to do justice to my research encounters with the mentally ill and the result has aided the bridging of science and humanism. What I have attempted to infuse into the research design is an attitude of compassion. This is an ethic and disposition of meeting others on the common ground of human experience. To return to the root of the word, compassion is to be with others. The Latin cum patior means to suffer with, to undergo with, to share solidarity with (Fox 1979, p. 3). This to be strongly distinguished from charity which is looking with pity towards the other, rather than being with them.

There is a need for this concept and disposition to be recovered from sentimentality, especially in times when social science is more closely embracing issues of social justice. The compassionate geographer is a person whose care for the world (and whose care for those whose world he or she is exploring) can enhance the lives of others. Compassion for the natural world implies a valuing of the environment for what it can be in terms of resources. In human geography, compassion suggests the recognition that everyone has something to contribute to our understanding of the world. A compassionate approach demands humility, risk of involvement and the time to listen. A compassionate method does not require gender, language or experience as the common ground for discourse. Rather a commitment to justice and human dignity prompt the research encounter to be a mutually affirming experience rather than simply an opportunity to extract data.

In terms of my own work, the common ground I have with the psychiatric clients is an acceptance on my part that the difficulties they experience in the city differ from mine more in degree than essential nature. My method becomes compassionate upon acceptance that

my support base, material resources, communicative abilities and health status all happen to be in better condition than theirs. My choice is to not let this inequality stand in the way of my relating to their situation to the best of my ability.

Compassionate method has infused various stages of research. To gain a high degree of familiarity with the client population, I spent twelve months as a regular volunteer at a mental health social centre prior to beginning interviews. During this time, my initiation of a creative writing group helped the building of rapport with a core group of members. The anecdotal data gathered during the year aided the construction of the "Life Management in the City Questionaire". This has sought both to measure, and to elicit narrative accounts of, the influence that living situation, social support, the service network and income have on coping ability. Instead of having power over the clients by solely asking questions, I have been able, by prompting narrative accounts, to grant them the power to speak their feelings and potentially see their situation in a new light.

The sample has been drawn from three programmes operating in the inner city of Hamilton. My volunteer experience at the mental health social centre has facilitated a pre-established acquaintanceship with one client group. The other two programmes are case-management in character. This has precluded familiarity with their clientele, but the depth of insight gained at the social centre has been invaluable in sensitizing me to the needs and backgrounds of other clients I meet in research. Inclusion of two other programmes in the survey also lends representativeness to the explanatory goals of the study.

Toward Integration in Social Geography

Scientific and humanistic approaches have, at least in recent geography, represented opposing ways of investigating the world and conceptualising humankind's being-in-the-world. I have argued from a methodological rather than philosophical perspective that in social geography this opposition need not be the case. The substantive problem I have discussed - the experience of daily life for the mentally ill - is one fostering both humanistic and scientific elements of inquiry.

A two-volume "social geography of the psychiatrically disabled" could be written. One volume might be devoted to a humanist interpretation of "the world of the mentally ill" while the other might be a "scientific" analysis of how this group copes in the city. But this would surely (i) perpetuate an unnecessary academic "schizophrenia", (ii) continue a redundant division of labour in the geographic task of exploring and explaining the world, and (iii) detract from the full and immediate response this sort of issue warrants under an ethic of social justice.

I have proposed that scientific and humanistic modes of inquiry can be more complementary than opposing. The project at hand is

inviting a convergence of approaches. This is because to investigate how the mentally ill cope, there is (i) a need to relate to the group under study and (ii) a need to translate their situation into an analysis that can suitably inform the social policy process. These dual components of an action-oriented social geography are inviting humanistic and scientific approaches respectively. In practice these components are less readily separable than discussion makes them appear.

I have also proposed that a compassionate approach to method is appropriate for (i) working with a marginalised group such as the mentally ill and (ii) in aiding the practical welding of science and humanism. Social justice need not be just the end-goal of research, but also in the immediacy of the interview setting, justice can be an active part of doing research.

A social geography of the city should, however imprecisely, strive to articulate the perspective of disadvantaged groups. Social science has too often maintained silence on such matters in the past. In social geography, silence is constructively broken by the infusion of humanist consideration into scientific research programmes. We must strive to construct not only a social geography of the city, but also a social geography for the city; not only of the mentally ill, but for the mentally ill. This can be achieved by:

(a) being committed to the welfare of the local context of research as well as to the research project itself;

(b) seeking to affirm and empower others in the immediacy of the research encounter;

(c) feeding back results of research to those who, at whatever level, can formulate liberating policy.

This challenges practitioners to not only transform their methods, but also be open to personal transformation by the issues and persons encountered in research. The tension inherent in this challenge and this convergence of science and humanism is ultimately a creative one and plays upon the geographer's dual heritage in the arts and sciences.

NOTE

My thanks to Tony Watkins of Karaka Bay for insisting that the dualisms do not matter and to Martin Taylor of McMaster for encouraging me to say so.

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POSTSCRIPT: HUMAN AND ENVIRONMENT - SOME RELATED CONCEPTUALIZATIONS AND A DEFENSE

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I stated in the introduction that a theme which united these discussions of humanism and geography was the problem of reconciling a philosophical and methodological centreing of human agency with the structural and systemic processes which form the context of human activity. I wish to remove my editor-of-a-collection hat for a moment and make two further points about this. The first I would have expanded had I authored a paper in this collection. The second is, like Ted Relph's post-script, a post-conference, in fact post-editing, comment.

First, despite the fact that this collection is titled "humanism and geography", the concerns expressed herein are by no means limited to those who would define themselves as humanists. Humanism has not been alone in its provocative concern to re-examine the basis of the discipline in light of a changing social reality. Both historical materialists and feminists have, in different ways, centred "human agency" in their study of human-environmental relations, and thus been forced to fundamentally re-examine both "human" and "environment". All three perspectives are, in contrast to positivism, philosophically anthropocentric, and thus share some common methodological problems. All have approached these problems, and the issues which raised them, in different ways, and have developed insights which might be fruitfully examined.

Historical materialists, sharing with humanists a concern for the relation between agency and structure/generalization, have examined this in terms of materially effective activity; as an internal relation between people and nature, animated and mediated through work (Ollman, 1976; Sayer, 1979). Here they would depart from some aspects of, for example, Leonard Guelke's idealist philosophy of history, although certainly not the central importance he attributes to history. But, as is evident in a number of these papers, notably those by Iain Wallace

and Audrey Kobayashi, the relation of ideal and material is not necessarily an oppositional one, but rather one which is socially interactive and therefore should be conceptually interactive.

Feminists in geography, with ties to both humanism and historical materialism, have gone further in their re-examination of human and environment. They have not only insisted on the centrality of human agency, but also that our model of human is an inadequate one. For any anthropocentric philosophy, understanding "human" in an effective and comprehensive way is a point of departure. Feminists have argued that humans are both women and men, and that the category "human" must be androgynous and above all, historically mutable, a category which constantly changes as women and men alter their activities. They have also argued that an adequate model of environment not only necessitates an empirical focus on the active process whereby agents create environments, but that all our geographic categories be developed out of this active process (Mackenzie, 1986 and forthcoming, Monk and Hanson, 1982). These concepts have been grounded largely in empirical activity, but some of the concepts introduced in the papers here - Iain Wallace's discussion of relationality, David Knight's concern with territorial aspects of identity, Audrey Kobayashi's discussion of language as action, as well as the methodogical bridges proposed by Elaine Bjorklund and Robin Kearns - may be points of convergence, which could mutually enrich feminist and humanist concepts.

Second, and this point is addressed most especially to the discussions by Ted Relph and Jim Lemon (whose arguments, as ever, I found stimulating). This philosophical and methodological concern is not an esoteric one. Both the anthropocentric nature of these three philosophies and their discussions of how to develop concepts for understanding "structure and human agency" stem from the fact that they are grounded in our everyday life and the concerns of their practioners to alter the conditions of life. One does not adopt a world view centred on human beings unless one cares what happens to human beings, and sees oneself as one of them (as us?). Certainly, one does not try to find ways of connecting everyday experience to global problems unless one wishes to develop understandings that allow for the extension of human control over these global processes. But no effective social change comes without understanding, without attempts to make connections, to expose relations, and to communicate this to others. Social action, to be effective, presupposes theoretical action. Sustaining effective action requires that we move constantly between "everyday concrete issues" which are the outcomes of our actions and attempts to generalize, to plan, to theorize. Surely this requires some discussions of concepts, of literature, of language? Discussion of theory and method can, admittedly, be a means of escape from reality. But its total rejection is as much an escape, this time from our responsibilities to develop and communicate critical, sensitive understandings.

These "unsystematic" comments (written in related traditions of editorializing), along with the wealth of ideas provided in the papers

included here certainly contain the seeds of that piquant phenomenon noted above: "a basis for further discussion".

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